

LONG ISLAND SOUND
FINAL PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
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Lead Agency

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-New England District
696 Virginia Road
Concord, MA 01742

Abstract: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) regulations for implementing NEPA, a Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) has been prepared as part of the Long Island Sound Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) Study. To facilitate safe navigation and marine commerce in Connecticut, New York, and Rhode Island rivers, harbors, and coastal areas throughout the Long Island Sound region, dredging activities and subsequent management of the dredged material must be conducted to maintain and periodically improve Federally authorized channel depths and widths. Navigation projects undertaken by the USACE produce most of the dredged material generated in Long Island Sound every year. Other Federal agencies, including the U.S. Navy and U.S. Coast Guard, also periodically generate dredged materials from the maintenance and improvement of their facilities in this region. Under USACE Engineer Regulation 1105-2-100, the USACE is responsible for developing a DMMP for USACE Navigation Projects where there is an indication of existing insufficient placement capacity to accommodate maintenance dredging for at least the next 20 years. The USACE conducted a Preliminary Assessment, approved in June 2006, to document the need for a comprehensive DMMP for the Long Island Sound region. In addition, because of the extensive area covered, and because of the funds and time needed to develop a comprehensive DMMP, it was determined that it would be more appropriate to extend the planning period to 30 years.

This Final PEIS describes the existing environment and assesses the impacts of available or potentially developable dredged material management alternatives for the USACE's DMMP for Long Island Sound. Potential placement alternatives evaluated in the Final PEIS include open-water placement, confined placement (in-harbor confined aquatic disposal (CAD); island, shoreline, and upland confined disposal facilities (CDFs); and landfill placement), beneficial use (nearshore berms, beach nourishment, landfill cover, brownfields and other redevelopment, habitat restoration, and other applications), and innovative treatment. By following a programmatic approach to assessing these impacts, decision makers will be able to evaluate different dredged material placement options with full knowledge of potential environmental consequences. The Final PEIS is an umbrella document that considers generic impacts of options. In the future, as specific alternatives are pursued to implement a given management option, specific project- and alternative-focused NEPA documents, building on information presented in this Final PEIS, will be prepared to address implementation of a given option at a specific location. Also at that time, any needed approvals and permits would be acquired for the specific project. As NEPA regulations require agencies to identify the agency's preferred alternative or alternatives in the final EIS (40 CFR 1502.14(e)), the USACE preferred alternative is to implement the recommendations of the DMMP.

Questions concerning the Final PEIS should be sent to Ms. Meghan Quinn at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, 696 Virginia Road Concord, Massachusetts 01742. Ms. Quinn can be reached via phone at (978) 318-8179.